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ABSTRACT

Pertussis is a severe epidemic and endemic disease with significant morbidity and mortality. The use of whole-cell pertussis vaccines in the United States has been effective in controlling the disease but not in decreasing the circulation of the organism. Whole-cell vaccines commonly cause reactions in children, and in addition, they are often blamed for temporally related neurologic illnesses. At the present time, the benefits of pertussis immunization clearly outweigh the risks, and therefore, current immunization programs should be vigorously encouraged. This report presents an objective, broad review of current information on pertussis and pertussis immunization. (JD)

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